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ABSTRACT

With the establishment of the Bureau of Institutional Schools (BIS) within the Division of Special Education, educational specialists have been appointed to represent the bureau in each of the division's six regional offices. The primary role of the BIS representative is one of assistance in the development of educational programs for children residing in state institutions. In addition, the BIS representative serves a liaison and coordination role between local education agencies, collaboratives, and parents. This individual also serves in a linkage capacity between the departments of education, mental health, public health, office for children, and the other human service agencies. These educational specialists are expected to assist in transforming the BIS philosophically based objectives into reality for the benefit of children presently in state institutions. It is the intent of this concept paper to establish guidelines for the BIS regional representatives to follow in an effort to clarify the specialists' role in relationship to his/her regional responsibilities. (Author)

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THE ROLE OF THE INSTITUTIONAL SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE:

MASSACHUSETTS STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

EA 007 128

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INTRODUCTION

The Regional Education Centers of the Massachusetts State Department of Education have been formulated to bring the Department of Education closer to the cities and towns to provide support and technical assistance to local education agencies. The Regional Education Centers serve as a conduit to disseminate information to LEAs, collaboratives, parents and other related state agencies. They also serve as a circulatory system through which funds and services are delivered to the aforementioned entities.

With the establishment of the Bureau of Institutional Schools within the Division of Special Education, educational specialists have been appointed to represent the Bureau in each of the six regional offices. The primary role of the B.I.S. representative is one of assistance in the development of educational programs for children residing in state institutions. In addition, the B.I.S. representative serves a liaisonary and coordination role between LEAs, collaboratives and parents. This individual also serves in a linkage capacity between the Departments of Education, Mental Health, Public Health, Office for Children and the other Human Service or Agencies. These educational specialists are expected to assist in transforming the B.I.S. philosophically based objectives into reality for the benefit of children presently in state institutions.

It is the intent of this concept paper to establish guidelines for the B.I.S. regional representatives to follow in an effort to clarify the specialists role in relationship to his/her regional responsibilities.

FUNCTIONS OF THE BUREAU OF INSTITUTIONAL SCHOOLS REPRESENTATIVE

1. PERSONNEL

Planning

- Designs training programs for public school personnel, collaboratives and other service providers in conjunction with state institutions and state agencies. Suggested areas: needs of the institutionalized child, the CET process for children living in institutions, development of LEA administrative structures to benefit Bureau of Institutional Schools children, the development of workshops for LEA teachers concerning B.I.S. children, and maximum utilization of program coordinators.

Implementation

- Assists in training programs for parents, teachers, LEAs, collaboratives and other service providers in conjunction with state agencies and the state institutional staff. Suggested areas: needs of institutionalized children, problems that students might encounter regarding the public school or institutionalized setting, and development of quality educational performance objectives to be included in educational plans.

- Provides information to LEAs, parents, collaboratives and other service providers regarding the CET process, rights of the child and responsibilities of LEA in providing educational programs for B.I.S. children.

- Assists program coordinators, Assistant Superintendents, collaboratives, parents and LEAs in the establishment of positive communication mechanisms between state agencies and their respective organizations.

- Serves as a resource for state requirements concerning professional certification.

2. SERVICE DELIVERY

Planning

- Lend technical assistance regarding the designs of education plans for institutionalized students in conjunction with LEAs, parents, program coordinators and the Assistant Superintendent for Children's Services.

- Lend technical assistance to LEAs, collaboratives and other service delivery providers in the development of education programs for children with special needs returning to the community from the institution.

- Encourages LEAs to form collaboratives.

3. FISCAL

Planning

- Assists the Assistant Superintendent for Children's Services in developing plans for use of funds for educational programs.

- Provides assistance to the Assistant Superintendent for Children's Services in grant proposal construction.

- Assists program coordinators, the Assistant Superintendent for Children's Services and public school administrators in identifying funding sources.

- Lend technical assistance regarding the preparation of budgets for individual educational plans of B.I.S. students to be implemented by LEAs, collaboratives or other service providers.

4. PUBLIC RELATIONS

- Supports B.I.S. activities through the Regional Advisory Council and the Regional Review Board.

- Provides parents, LEAs, collaboratives and other service delivery systems information pertinent to Chapter 766; e.g. policy memos, regulations and fiscal information concerning Bureau of Institutional Schools.

- To be cognizant of the public relations impact each B.I.S. activity has and the implications regarding improved services for children with special needs from the institutions.

5. SPECIAL EDUCATION INTER-BUREAU COORDINATION

- To encourage cooperative planning between the Division of Special Education Regional Staff representing each Bureau regarding delivery of services to LEAs, parents, collaboratives and other consumer education groups.

6. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Planning

- Develops with regional Bureau of Intervention Staff monitoring and data collection instruments for evaluating LEA programs for institutionalized children.

Implementation

- Collects educational data from program coordinators and disseminates information to LEAs, Regional Advisory Council, parents, collaboratives and other service delivery providers.
- Meets periodically with LEA, collaboratives, Assistant Superintendents for Children's Services and parents to relate information regarding B.I.S. and LEA concerns based on data collection.
- Recommends changes in existing programs based on data collection and makes suggestions for new and/or alternative programs.